(b) It would not be possible to lay down a time limit for such a major procurement project. However, the government is keen on early finalisation of the issue.

(c) No contract for the AJT has been finalised.

Setting-up of handicraft complexes in Andhra Pradesh

*228. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have provided assistance for setting-up of handicraft complexes in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the places where these complexes have been set up; and

(c) the other places in the State where more such compelxes are proposed to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. assistance has been provided for setting up of an "Urban Haat" at Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) No proposal is pending with the Government of India.

Indo-US Security and Strategic Dialogue poised for a Higher Leap

*229. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI SATISH PRADHAN:
Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Defence Minister has stated that New Delhi would ask Washington to immediately lift the ban on sale of high-tech armaments and systems;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) steps Government have so far taken or propose to take to improve relation with USA?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir. No formal request has been made.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Government has had a high level of engagement with the new U.S. Administration since it entered office in January, 2001. Regular consultations